

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 304360  
ORIGIN OES-07

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EUR/NE - J. SHUMATE  
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TO AMEMBASSY NASSAU  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

UNCLAS STATE 304360

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: TOCY, BA, UK, DR

SUBJECT: R/V WESTWARD CLEARANCE REQUEST, 8 FEB - 12 APR  
1978

1. R/V WESTWARD, A PRIVATE VESSEL OPERATED BY THE SEA  
EDUCATION ASSOCIATION (SEA), IS PLANNING TO CONDUCT  
MARINE SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH IN THE REGION OF THE BAHAMAS  
AND CARIBBEAN DURING 8 FEB - 12 APR 1978. WESTWARD IS  
A SAILING VESSEL WITH THE PRIMARY OBJECTIVE OF EDUCATING  
STUDENTS IN OCEANOGRAPHY. DURING THIS CRUISE MARINE  
MAMMALS, ESPECIALLY HUMPBACK WHALES, WILL BE OBSERVED; THE  
DISTRIBUTION OF EEL LARVAE WILL BE STUDIED; SHARK TAGGING  
AND MIGRATION STUDIES WILL BE MADE; METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVA-  
TIONS WILL BE TAKEN; VARIOUS OCEANOGRAPHIC DATA COLLECTING  
DEVICES WILL BE DEMONSTRATED TO STUDENTS; AND STUDENTS  
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WILL SNORKEL OVER CORAL REEFS WITH THE SOLE PURPOSE OF  
TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS AND OBSERVING.

2.A. STUDIES IN THIS AREA WILL INCLUDE COLLECTION OF  
DATA ON DISTRIBUTION AND POPULATION SIZE, INTERSPECIFIC  
BEHAVIOR, RECORDING OF UNDERWATER SOUNDS, OBSERVATIONS  
ON ANOMALOUS PIGMENTATION PATTERNS, PHOTO-IDENTIFICATION

OF INDIVIDUAL WHALES, AND DETERMINATION OF MIGRATORY ROUTES AND BEHAVIOR. APPROXIMATELY 2-3 WEEKS WILL BE

SPENT CENSUSING THE HUMPBACK POPULATION ON SILVER AND MAVIDAD BANKS, NORTH OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC WHERE 85 PER CENT OF THE HUMPBACKS IN THE WESTERN NORTH ATLANTIC ARE BELIEVED TO WINTER.

B. EEL LARVAE ARE HATCHED IN THE SARGASSO SEA, ARE BELIEVED TO DRIFT WITH THE CURRENTS FOR APPROXIMATELY ONE YEAR OVER DISTANCES OF UP TO SEVERAL THOUSAND MILES, AND, AFTER A METAMORPHOSIS,, EVENTUALLY ARRIVE AT THE COAST-LINE TO TAKE UP THEIR ADULT HABITATS. THERE REMAINS A GOOD DEAL OF SPECULATION ABOUT THIS MIGRATION, AND ABOUT THE MECHANISMS WHICH MAY BE INVOLVED. STATIONS WILL BE MADE PRIMARILY IN THE SARGASSO SEA, IN THE CARIBBEAN, AND IN THE INTER-ISLAND PASSAGES ALONG THE CRUISE TRACK. NET SAMPLES AND HYDROGRAPHIC DATA WILL BE COLLECTED AT EACH STATION. NUMBERS AND SIZE OF LARVAE WILL BE PLOTTED AGAINST POSITION, DEPTH, TEMPERATURE, AND SALINITY.

C. MEASUREMENTS ON TEMPERATURE STRUCTURE AND SALINITY VALUES WILL BE TAKEN IN SEVERAL TRANSECTS ACROSS THE GULF STREAM TO CONTINUE STUDIES ON THE DISTINCTIVE FEATURES IN THE WATER COLUMN AND STUDY THE CURRENT AS A TRANSPORT MECHANISM FOR EEL LARVAE.

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D. WEATHER OBSERVATIONS ARE TAKEN PERIODICALLY, AND CALLED IN VIA THE SHIP'S RADIO-TELEPHONE TO A NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE CENTER IN PORTSMOUTH, VIRGINIA. OBSERVATIONS BY WESTWARD, OTHER VESSELS, AND LAND STATIONS, FEED INTO A CENTRALIZED NETWORK, ARE COMPUTERIZED, AND RESULT IN THE SYNOPTIC WEATHER REPORTS AND FORECASTS ISSUED BY THIS AGENCY.

E. SHARK TAGGING BY WESTWARD IS PART OF A COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM OF CAPTURE-RECAPTURE OF SHARKS COORDINATED BY JOHN CASEY AT THE NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE LAB IN NARRAGANSETT, RHODE ISLAND. THE RESULTS ARE USED TO PLOT THE RATHER EXTENSIVE MOVEMENTS/MIGRATIONS OF MANY SPECIES OF SHARKS -- WHICH APPEAR TO BE COMPARABLE IN MANY WAYS TO THE MIGRATIONS OF BIRDS, WHALES, TUNA, TURTLES, AND OTHER WIDE-RANGING SPECIES.

3. THE CHIEF SCIENTIST IS DR. JAMES HAIN OF SEA WITH A SCIENTIFIC PARTY OF 4 AND 24 STUDENTS. BERTHS ARE AVAILABLE FOR TWO SCIENTISTS FROM HOST COUNTRY WHILE WORKING OFF THE COAST OF EACH PARTICULAR COUNTRY. ALL

DATA RESULTS WILL BE FREELY SHARED WITH HOST COUNTRIES.

4. ITINERARY IS AS FOLLOWS:

MIAMI - 8 FEB  
GRAND TURK - 22-25 FEB  
PUERTO PLATA, D.R. - 9-10 MAR  
LITTLE SAN SALVADOR - 15-16 MAR  
MIAMI - 22 MAR - 1 APR  
MIAMI - 12 APR

ALL PORT CALLS WILL BE ARRANGED BY SHIP'S AGENT.

5. SHIP'S CAPTAIN IS SIDNEY MILLER WITH A CREW OF 6.  
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WESTWARD IS 220 GROSS TONS, 100 FT. LONG, AND HAS A 12.5  
FT. DRAFT. RADIO CALL SIGN IS WZL 8190 AND SHIP HAS  
DAILY CONTACT WITH SEA OFFICE VIA RADIOTELEPHONE.

6. EQUIPMENT TO BE UTILIZED CONSISTS OF ACOUSTIC  
RECORDING GEAR, CAMERAS, BIOLOGICAL NETS AND TRAWLS,  
NANSEN BOTTLES, AND METEOROLOGICAL INSTRUMENTS.

7. ACTION: EMBASSIES ARE REQUESTED TO SEEK PERMISSION  
FOR R/V WESTWARD TO CONDUCT MARINE SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH  
IN TERRITORIAL WATERS OF BAHAMAS, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC,  
AND UNITED KINGDOM (TURK AND CAICOS ISLANDS) DURING  
PERIOD 8 FEB - 12 APR 1978. RESEARCH PARTY WOULD ALSO  
LIKE PERMISSION TO GO ASHORE WHILE CONDUCTING THEIR  
SNORKELING OBSERVATIONS AT LITTLE SAN SALVADOR ISLAND  
AND HOGSTY REEF (BAHAMAS). A SHIP'S TRACK IS BEING  
POUCHED. RESEARCH ABOARD WESTWARD WILL BE CONDUCTED  
CLOSE-IN, WITHIN 3 MILES OF THE COASTS OF THE BAHAMAS,  
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, AND UNITED KINGDOM (TURKS AND CAICOS  
ISLANDS). VANCE

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## Message Attributes

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